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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009

#### Media Highlights

Breaking News: Turkish TV headlines with 10,000 person protest underway at AKP Headquarters in Ankara. CNN reports that Tobacco Monopoly workers from various provinces came to Ankara in 106 busses and are gathered in front of the AKP headquarters to protest lost jobs in the provinces.

#### How US is Playing

10 US Senators Criticize Worsening Ties With Israel: Mainstream Haber Turk and Hurriyet Daily News report that ten Democrat and Republican Senators are moving forward on a letter criticizing worsening Turkey-Israel ties. Citing the cancellation of recent military exercises, the letter notes "Turkey's longstanding strategic cooperation with Israel and its positive role as a honest mediator in the Middle East are important sources of stability in the region and are of vital importance to the US."

Iran Hikers: In "Iran Will Use Nuclear Issue As A Trump Card for Iranian Hikers," mainstream Hurriyet says "as tensions build between Iran and the West, Iran said that three Americans arrested in July after crossing the border from northern Iraq would be tried." Mainstream Sabah headlines "Three Americans Will Be Tried for Espionage," noting comments by Iranian FM Mottaki who said the Americans had "entered Iran illegally, with suspicious objectives."

Copenhagen: Ambassador Jeffrey Op-ed on Climate Change was published in mainstream Milliyet on 12/13. Today, Turkish media report on the refusal of African countries and G-77 members to continue the talks in Copenhagen over disagreements on the funding of poor countries. Columnist Sami Kohen in mainstream Milliyet urges the need for Turkey to boost public awareness on the environment, but notes "it is very difficult to see a binding decision for all participating countries" because of differences between the developed and underdeveloped ones. CNNTurk reports in "Four Days Left to Save the World" that the UNSG Ban Ki Mun has made a universal call and asked for developed and developing countries to come up with a consensus instead of remaining committed to accusations.

## Other News

### Last Decision: DTP Resigns from Parliament/Erdogan Comments

PM Erdogan told reporters yesterday that the government hasn't how to proceed if all DTP members submit their resignation, as predicted. "We prefer them to stay but we will see what we will do when the time comes." Talking to Yeni Safak, the two prominent names of the DTP -- Ahmet Turk and Aysel Tugluk -- reiterated the decision to resign from parliament, calling everyone "to think about ways for dialogue and creating an atmosphere for brotherhood." A new pro-Kurdish party is likely to replace the DTP, Yeni Safak reports. In southeast Silopi, DTP name tag was removed from the building and replaced with a new "Peace and Democracy Party" (BDP), which was founded on May 2009. Yeni Safak columnist Murat Aksoy comments on the parallel efforts underway to establish a brand-new leftist party and how some Kurdish politicians are involved in the process. He predicts the new party will be announced in early 2010.

**Blogger Spotlight:** Turkey's prominent blogger and columnist Yurtsan Atakan commented in his blog: "The argument about 'no party closure in democracies' is absolutely pointless. Threatening the regime or working for separatism are all very reasons for party closure in democracies. Political parties can only be closed down through voters choice is another myth, because in reality the rule of law is only protector of the regime and minority rights."

**EU Commission Comments on the DTP Ruling:** All papers report today that Amadeu Alfataj Tardio, spokesman for the EU Commission, has

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issued a new statement commenting on the DTP ruling: "The Court ruling will negatively impact political representation of a significant number of voters in Turkey."

**Democratic Initiative Debate Rages:** In a heated parliament debate on 12/14, opposition leaders CHP Baykal and MHP Bahceli accused the government for paving the way for internal chaos. In reply, PM Erdogan characterized recent developments as "local incidents" and claimed a "media exaggeration." Meanwhile, leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines "Streets are Tense and Fights in Parliament is at Fight." Turkish pundits also weighed in on the status of the initiative. Murat Yetkin in liberal Radikal is disappointed that PM Erdogan did not pay attention to CHP leader Baykal's call: "Baykal pledged support if the government goes for a comprehensive democratization package. This is an important chance for successful outcome but Erdogan seemed busy to accuse opposition for the current tension. Islamist Yeni Safak's Akif Emre has a suggestion for government: "If proper steps for democratization are taken there would be no basis left for street riots." Gungor Mengi in mainstream Vatan thinks the election threshold is the major obstacle before any democratic initiative: "Given current 10% election hurdle, no initiative can go anywhere politically. It has to be lifted completely or make it as low as 5% instead."

### Turkey Mosaic: Public Opinion Poll Shows Disapproval for the Democratic Initiative

In a country-wide survey on ethnic origins conducted by Konsensus Research and sponsored by mainstream daily HaberTurk, 76.5% of people resident in Turkey define themselves as "Turks" while 13.6 % call themselves "Kurds." The rest is listed as Laz (3.3%), Arab (1.8%) and Russian (0.01%). The support for government's Democratic "Kurdish" initiative remained 33.1% while 66.9% expressed disapproval.

### Turkish gov't freezes shares in Dogan media units

Mainstream Hurriyet reports that the tax office froze shares in Dogan Medya Group units, including Hurriyet Gazetecilik.

**Bosnian Action Plan is Ready (Zaman)** Intellectual/Islamist-oriented Zaman reports that the Foreign Ministers of Turkey, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia agreed on an action plan regarding the re-construction of Bosnia during their meeting in Sarajevo yesterday. The parties, prior to the elections in October, will try to eliminate the internal differences between the Bosnians and Serbs. Ankara will work on Bosnia issue intensively in January and

February, the paper adds. Within this framework, the Bosnian PM will meet with PM Erdogan in Ankara today.

Iran's Secret Nuclear Trigger: Turkish media give prominent play to The Times story on 'a new secret document' that demonstrates Iranian interests in developing a nuclear bomb. In "Iran's Secret Nuclear Document Leaked," mainstream Sabah highlights, "Iran's nuclear program is focused on developing a nuclear bomb, indicates no civil application." Mainstream Hurriyet headlines reads, "Iran Develops A Nuclear Trigger," noting, "excerpts from the technical paper detail a four-year program by Iranian scientists to develop and test a neutron initiator, a device used to trigger a nuclear explosion." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet, in "Iran is Very Close to An Atomic Bomb" highlights The Times' comment that "Israel has to decide, in a couple of months, whether to go ahead with an attack on Iran or not."

#### Swine Flu Update

All papers and TV Channels today report that the death toll in swine flu cases reached to 415.

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